

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are pending in the present application. No additional claims fee is believed to be due.

The Rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) over King

Claims 1-12 have been rejected have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by King, et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,595,567 (hereinafter "King"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, as King does not teach a loop member for mechanical fastening having pattern elements that are at least partially bounded by a non-circular, non-linear segment of one of the bond lines, wherein said pattern includes at least 3.2 pattern elements per square centimeter.

The Office Action states that Figure 6 of King shows circular bond patterns that intersect. Applicants respectfully assert that the circular patterns in King are not intersecting. At no point does one circular pattern divide or pass across another circular pattern. Thus, the circular patterns shown in King do not intersect. Further, the claims of the present invention are directed to non-circular pattern elements.

The Office Action further states that King discloses bond pattern lines made from the shape of an ellipse or an oval, which is non-circular. While King discloses that bonding patterns suitable for a loop fastening material can include straight or curved lines, King does not disclose bond lines that are intersecting and curved, as claimed in the present invention. The definition given in Column 8, lines 17-25 of King teach that the bond lines define "nonwoven web bonding pattern elements." This term refers to specific geometrical elements. The only geometrical elements disclosed in King defined by curved lines are circles, ovals and ellipses, all of which do not have intersecting lines. King only discloses non-intersecting curved bond lines; King does not disclose intersecting curved bond lines. In contrast, Claim 1 cannot define circular pattern elements. King does not teach intersecting, curved bond lines as claimed in the present invention.

Further, King does not teach patterns having at least 3.2 pattern elements per square centimeter, as defined and claimed in the present invention. Rather, King teaches patterns having sides that measure between about 1.3cm and 0.3cm. King makes no mention of a pattern of intersecting bond lines defining unbonded pattern elements, each of the pattern elements being at least partially bounded by a non-circular, non-linear segment of one of the bond lines, wherein the pattern includes at least 3.2 pattern elements per square centimeter.

As described on page 14, lines 5-17 of the specification, non-woven webs having 3.2 pattern elements per square centimeter have been found to produce excellent reliability when used as a loop fastener with hooks. It is believed that increased reliability is achieved because by introducing bond lines having non-circular, non-linear segments, each pattern element has associated therewith more anchored fibers without a proportional increase in the percentage of overall bonded area. King does not teach a loop member for mechanical fastening having a pattern of intersection bond lines, wherein said pattern includes at least 3.2 pattern elements per square centimeter. The Office Action incorrectly concludes that the claimed pattern elements of the present invention are the same as the extrapolation of the pattern side measurements of the King invention.

The present invention is directed to a loop member for a mechanical fastener that provides the loop member with increased fastening reliability of the loops without a proportional decrease in the amount of loops available for fastening, i.e. the amount of loops available for hook engagement. As demonstrated in Table 1 and Figure 8 in the instant specification, fastening reliability can be increased by increasing the amount of contour without a proportional decrease in the amount of loops available for fastening. The amount of contour (which is a measure of the number of anchored fibers increasing the fastening reliability) rises at a faster rate as the amount of overall bond area (which is a measure of totally bonded fibers, unavailable for hook engagement). The slope of the broken line (contour) of Figure 8 is steeper than the slope of the solid line (total bond area).

Applicants contend that the King reference does not anticipate Applicants' Claims 1-12, as the King patent does not teach pattern elements as claimed in the present invention.

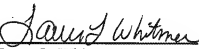
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Therefore, Applicants contend that the present invention is novel in view of King and that the rejection should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that each of the issues raised by the Office Action has been addressed. Reconsideration and allowance of each of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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